

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed December 29, 2004. Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1 – 3, 5 – 11 and 13 – 16 remain pending. In particular, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 9, and has canceled claims 4 and 12 without waiver, disclaimer or prejudice. Applicant has canceled claims 4 and 12 merely to reduce the number of disputed issues and to facilitate early allowance and issuance of other claims in the present application. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of these canceled claims in a continuing application, if Applicant so chooses, and does not intend to dedicate the canceled subject matter to the public. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicates that claims 4 – 7 and 11 – 14 are allowed. Additionally, the Office Action indicates that claims 3 and 9 are allowable if re-written in independent form. In this regard, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations previously recited in claim 3. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 1, its dependent claim 2 and claims 8 and 10, which both include the limitations of claim 1, also are in condition for allowance.

In the Abstract

The Office Action indicates that the Abstract is objected to because of an informality. As set forth above Applicant has amended the Abstract and respectfully asserts that the objection has been accommodated.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102

The Office Action indicates that claims 1, 2, 8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 102 as being anticipated by *Bates*. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. In particular, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations previously recited in claim 3, the allowability of which is set forth in the Office Action. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejection has been rendered moot.

Cited Art of Record

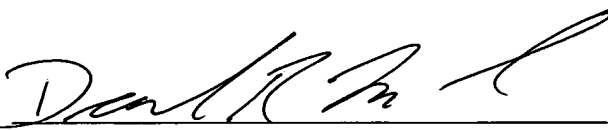
The cited art of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this Amendment and Response. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
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